

In view of the restriction requirement and Applicants election, claims 1-13 have been canceled in this response.

Claims 14-37 were presented for consideration by the Examiner. Claims 14-37 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(e). Claims 18-20, 23, and 31-37 have been rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a). The Examiner further objected to claims 30 and 37 because of informalities. Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of the claims under sections 102(e) and 103(a) for the following reasons. Claims 14-37 and the new claims 38-43 remain in this application for reconsideration by the Examiner in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Such reconsideration is respectfully requested by the Applicants.

Claim 14 has been amended to more clearly claim what the Applicants regard as their invention. More specifically, claim 14 has been amended to claim that the suspension element has electrically conducting paths and that the interconnect module routes data signals between the electrically conducting paths and the slider/head assembly. Ample support for this amendment is provided in the specification. Applicants submit that no new matter has been added by this amendment.

Claim 18 has been amended to more clearly claim what the Applicants regard as their invention. More specifically, claim 18 has been amended to claim that the suspension element has electrically conducting paths and that the interconnect module routes data signals between the electrically conducting paths and the microactuator. Ample support for this amendment is provided in the specification. Applicants submit that no new matter has been added by this amendment.

Claim 21 has been amended to more clearly claim what the Applicants regard as their invention. More specifically, claim 21 has been amended to claim that the second device has electrically conducting paths and that the interconnect device routes one or more signals between the first device and the electrically conducting paths. Ample support for this amendment is provided in the specification. Applicants submit that no new matter has been added by this amendment.

Claim 24 has been amended to more clearly claim what the Applicants regard as their invention. More specifically, claim 24 has been amended to claim that the suspension element has

electrically conducting paths and that the interconnect module routes one or more data signals between the electrically conducting paths and the slider/head assembly. Ample support for this amendment is provided in the specification. Applicants submit that no new matter has been added by this amendment.

Claim 27 has been amended to more clearly claim what the Applicants regard as their invention. More specifically, claim 27 has been amended to claim that the suspension element has electrically conducting paths and that the interconnect module routes data signals between the electrically conducting paths and the slider/head assembly. Ample support for this amendment is provided in the specification. Applicants submit that no new matter has been added by this amendment.

Claim 31 has been amended to more clearly claim what the Applicants regard as their invention. More specifically, claim 31 has been amended to claim that the suspension element has electrically conducting paths and that the interconnect module routes data signals between the electrically conducting paths and the microactuator. Ample support for this amendment is provided in the specification. Applicants submit that no new matter has been added by this amendment.

Claim 34 has been amended to more clearly claim what the Applicants regard as their invention. More specifically, claim 34 has been amended to claim that the suspension element has electrically conducting paths and that the interconnect module routes data signals between the electrically conducting paths and the microactuator. Ample support for this amendment is provided in the specification. Applicants submit that no new matter has been added by this amendment.

Claims 17, 30 and 37 have been amended to correct a typographical error in each claim. Applicants thank the Examiner for pointing out the error in each claim. Applicants submit that no new matter has been added by amendments to claims 17, 30 and 37.

#### New Claims 38-43

The new claims 38-43 have been added to further claim what the Applicants regard as their invention. More specifically, claims 38, 39, and 41-43 claim further that the electrically conducting paths are attached to the suspension in each claim. Claim 40 claims further that the

electrically conducting paths are attached to the second device. Ample support for the new claims is provided in the specification. Applicants submit that no new matter has been added by the new claims 38-43.

#### Drawings

The Examiner required that Figs. 1 and 2 be labeled "Prior Art." Along with this response Applicants will submit amended Figs. 1 and 2 labeled "Prior Art" in red for the Examiner's approval.

#### Objection to Claims 30 and 37

The Examiner objected to claims 30 and 37 for informalities. Applicants submit that the amendments to claims 30 and 37 have removed the informalities in both claims. Applicants thank the Examiner for his suggestion.

#### Rejection of Claims 14-37 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e)

Claims 14-37 have been rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by Simmons et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,862,010) ("Simmons"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 14-37 for the following reasons.

The amended independent claim 14 claims a suspension assembly that comprises a slider/head assembly, a suspension having electrically conducting paths, and an interconnect module that is coupled between the suspension and the slider/head assembly to route one or more data signals between the electrically conducting paths and the slider/head assembly.

As it is understood by the Applicants, Simmons fails to show or teach a suspension assembly that comprises an interconnect module that routes one or more data signals between the electrically conducting paths of the suspension and the slider/head assembly.

On page 5 of the above-mentioned Office Action, the Examiner refers to the element 120 in Fig. 3 of Simmons as the interconnect module. However, Simmons refers to element 120 of Fig. 3 as the electrical lines. (Column 3, line 64) It is clear that these lines are not the interconnect module as claimed in the amended claim 14 of the present application.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that Simmons fails to teach or show all the elements of the amended claim 14. Therefore, Simmons fails to anticipate the amended claim 14.

Claims 15-17 depend on the amended independent claim 14 and have all the limitation of the base claim. Accordingly, the above argument with respect to the amended claim 14 equally applies to the dependent claim 15-17 and is hereby incorporated by reference.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that Simmons fails to teach or show all the elements of the dependent claims 15-17. Therefore, Simmons fails to anticipate the dependent claims 15-17.

The amended claim 18 claims a suspension assembly that comprises a slider/head assembly, a suspension having electrically conducting paths, a microactuator, and an interconnect module that is coupled between the suspension and the microactuator and routes one or more data signals between the electrically conducting paths and the microactuator.

As it is understood by the Applicants, Simmons fails to show or teach a suspension assembly that includes an interconnect module that is coupled between a suspension and the microactuator and routes one or more data signals between the electrically conducting paths of the suspension and the microactuator.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that Simmons fails to show or teach all the elements of the present invention as claimed in the amended claim 18. Therefore, Simmons fails to anticipate the present invention as claimed in the amended claim 18.

Claims 19 and 20 depend on the amended claim 18 and, hence, include all the limitations of the base claim 18. Accordingly, the above argument with respect to claim 18 equally applies to the dependent claims 19 and 20 and is hereby incorporated by reference.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that Simmons fails to teach or show all the elements of the dependent claims 19 and 20. Therefore, Simmons fails to anticipate the dependent claims 19 and 20.

The amended independent claim 21 claims an assembly that comprises a first device, a second device that has electrically conducting paths, and an interconnect device that is coupled between the first and second devices and routes one or more signals between the first device and the electrically conducting paths.

As it is understood by the Applicants, Simmons fails to teach or show all the elements of the present invention as claimed in the amended claim 21 since it fails to show or teach an

interconnect module that is coupled between a first and a second device and routes one or more signals between a first device and the electrically conducting paths of the second device.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that Simmons fails to anticipate the present invention as claimed in the amended claim 21.

Claims 22 and 23 depend on the amended claim 21 and, hence, include all the limitations of the base claim 21. Accordingly, the above argument with respect to claim 21 equally applies to the dependent claims 22 and 23 and is hereby incorporated by reference.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that Simmons fails to teach or show all the elements of the dependent claims 22 and 23. Therefore, Simmons fails to anticipate the dependent claims 22 and 23.

The amended claim 24 claims a storage device that comprises a suspension assembly that includes an interconnect module coupled between a slider/head assembly and a suspension that has electrically conducting paths. The interconnect module routes one or more data signals between the electrically conducting paths and the slider/head assembly.

As it is understood by the Applicants, Simmons fails to show or teach a storage device that includes a suspension assembly that includes an interconnect module that routes one or more data signals between the electrically conducting paths of a suspension and a slider/head assembly of the suspension assembly.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that Simmons fails to anticipate the present invention as claimed in the independent claim 24.

Claims 25 and 26 depend on the amended claim 24 and, hence, include all the limitations of the base claim 24. Accordingly, the above argument with respect to claim 24 equally applies to the dependent claims 25 and 26 and is hereby incorporated by reference.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that Simmons fails to teach or show all the elements of the dependent claims 25 and 26. Therefore, Simmons fails to anticipate the dependent claims 25 and 26.

The amended claim 27 claims a test system for disks that comprises a test platform that includes a suspension assembly coupled to an actuator. The actuator is operable to position the suspension assembly above a disk to access the disk for a test operation. The suspension

assembly includes an interconnect module that is coupled between a slider/head assembly and a suspension that has electrically conducting paths and routes one or more data signals between the electrically conducting paths and the slider/head assembly.

On page 9 of the above-identified Office Action, the Examiner refers to the system 10 in Fig. 1 of Simmons as the test platform. Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's position since Simmons refers to the system 10 as the data storage system. (Column 2, lines 65 and 66) This is clearly not a test platform. In Fig. 1, Simmons is showing a data storage system and not a test platform. Thus, Simmons fails to show a platform in general.

More specifically, As it is understood by the Applicants, Simmons fails to teach or show a test platform that includes an interconnect module that is coupled between a suspension and a slider/head assembly and routes one or more data signals between the electrically conducting paths of the suspension and the slider/head assembly.

In view of the above, Applicants submits that Simmons fails to anticipate the present invention as claimed in the amended claim 27.

Claims 28-30 depend on the amended claim 27 and, hence, include all the limitations of the base claim 27. Accordingly, the above argument with respect to claim 27 equally applies to the dependent claims 28-30 and is hereby incorporated by reference.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that Simmons fails to teach or show all the elements of the dependent claims 28-30. Therefore, Simmons fails to anticipate the dependent claims 28-30.

The amended claim 31 claims a storage device that comprises a suspension assembly that includes an interconnect module coupled between a suspension that has electrically conducting paths and a microactuator. The interconnect module routes one or more data signals between the electrically conducting paths and the microactuator.

As it is understood by the Applicants, Simmons fails to show or teach a storage device that includes a suspension assembly that includes an interconnect module that routes one or more data signals between the electrically conducting paths of a suspension and a microactuator of the suspension assembly.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that Simmons fails to anticipate the present invention as claimed in the independent claim 31.

Claims 32 and 33 depend on the amended claim 31 and, hence, include all the limitations of the base claim 31. Accordingly, the above argument with respect to claim 31 equally applies to the dependent claims 32 and 33 and is hereby incorporated by reference.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that Simmons fails to teach or show all the elements of the dependent claims 32 and 33. Therefore, Simmons fails to anticipate the dependent claims 32 and 33.

The amended claim 34 claims a test system for disks that comprises a test platform that includes a suspension assembly coupled to an actuator. The actuator is operable to position the suspension assembly above a disk to access the disk for a test operation. The suspension assembly includes an interconnect module that is coupled between a suspension that has electrically conducting paths and a microactuator and routes one or more data signals between the electrically conducting paths of the suspension and the microactuator.

On page 10 of the above-identified Office Action, the Examiner refers to the system 10 in Fig. 1 of Simmons as the test platform. Applicants respectfully disagree with the Examiner's position since Simmons refers to the system 10 as the data storage system. (Column 2, lines 65 and 66) This is clearly not a test platform. In Fig. 1, Simmons is showing a data storage system and not a test platform. Thus, Simmons fails to show a platform in general.

More specifically, As it is understood by the Applicants, Simmons fails to teach or show a test platform that includes an interconnect module that is coupled between a suspension and a microactuator and routes one or more data signals between the electrically conducting paths of the suspension and the microactuator.

In view of the above, Applicants submits that Simmons fails to anticipate the present invention as claimed in the amended claim 34.

Claims 35-37 depend on the amended claim 34 and, hence, include all the limitations of the base claim 34. Accordingly, the above argument with respect to claim 34 equally applies to the dependent claims 35-37 and is hereby incorporated by reference.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that Simmons fails to teach or show all the elements of the dependent claims 35-37. Therefore, Simmons fails to anticipate the dependent claims 35-37.

Rejection of the Claims under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 18-20, 23, and 31-37 were rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Simmons et al. In view of Yan (U.S. Patent No. 6,025,988) ("Yan"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection of claims 18-20, 23, and 31-37 for the following reasons.

The amended claim 18 claims a suspension assembly that comprises a slider/head assembly, a suspension having electrically conducting paths, a microactuator, and an interconnect module that is coupled between the suspension and the microactuator and routes one or more data signals between the electrically conducting paths and the microactuator.

As it is understood by the Applicants, Simmons fails to show or teach a suspension assembly that includes an interconnect module that is coupled between a suspension and the microactuator and routes one or more data signals between the electrically conducting paths of the suspension and the microactuator.

Applicant submits that the combination of Simmons and Yan also fails to teach or suggest the present invention as claimed in the amended claim 18. On page 12 of the above-mentioned Office Action, the Examiner refers to the interconnect module that includes element 26 in Fig. 1 of Yan. However, this is not at all the same element as claimed in the amended claim 18. In fact, the addition of the teaching of Yan to that of Simmons would not add any element beyond what Simmons has shown.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that the combination of the teachings of Simmons and Yan fails to render obvious the present invention as claimed in the amended claim 18.

Claims 19 and 20 depend on the amended claim 18 and, hence, include all the limitations of the base claim 18. Accordingly, the above argument with respect to claim 18 equally applies to the dependent claims 19 and 20 and is hereby incorporated by reference.



In view of the above, Applicants submit that the combination of the teachings of Simmons and Yan fails to render obvious the present invention as claimed in the dependent claims 19 and 20.

Above, Applicants discussed why Simmons failed to show or teach all the elements of the dependent claim 23. That argument is hereby incorporated by reference. The Examiner is relying on Yan for its alleged teaching of microactuator and suspension. However, Applicants submit that combining the teaching of the Simmons and that of Yan would still not teach or show the elements of the present invention as claimed in the dependent claim 23.

The dependent claim 23 claims an assembly that includes an interconnect module that is coupled between a microactuator and a suspension and routes one or more signals between the microactuator and the electrically conducting paths of the suspension. Essentially neither Simmons nor Yan teaches the interconnect of claim 23. Accordingly, the combination of the two references would not also teach or render obvious the present invention as claimed in the dependent claim 23.

Above, Applicants discussed why Simmons fails to teach or show the present invention as claimed in claims 31-33. Each claim claims a storage device that comprises a suspension assembly that includes an interconnect module coupled between a suspension that has electrically conducting paths and a microactuator. The interconnect module routes one or more data signals between the electrically conducting paths and the microactuator. Simmons failed to teach such an interconnect module. As it is understood by the Applicants, Yan fails also to teach such interconnect module. Accordingly, the combination of the two references would fail to teach the present invention as claimed in claims 31-33.

Above, Applicants discussed why Simmons fails to teach or show the present invention as claimed in claim 34-37. Each claim claims in part a test platform that includes an interconnect module that is coupled between a suspension and a microactuator and routes one or more data signals between the electrically conducting paths of the suspension and the microactuator.

Applicants submit that Yan fails to teach a test platform as claimed in claims 34-37. More specifically, Yan fails to teach a test platform that includes an interconnect module as claimed in claims 34-37 of the present invention. Thus, the combination of the teachings of Simmons and

Yan also fails to teach or show all the elements of the present invention as claimed in claims 34-37.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that the combination of the Simmons and Yan fails to render the present invention as claimed in claims 34-37 obvious.

#### New Claims 38-43

Claim 38 depends on the amended claim 14 and, hence, includes all the limitations of the amended claim 14. Accordingly, the above argument with respect to the independent claim 14 equally applies to the new dependent claim 38 and is hereby incorporated by reference.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that Simmons fails to teach or show all the elements of the new claim 38.

Claim 39 depends on the amended claim 18 and, hence, includes all the limitations of the amended claim 18. Accordingly, the above argument with respect to the independent claim 18 equally applies to the new dependent claim 39 and is hereby incorporated by reference.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that Simmons fails to teach or show all the elements of the new claim 39. In addition, Applicants submit that the combination of Simmons and Yan fails to render the present invention as claimed in the new claim 39 obvious.

Claims 40 and 41 depend on the amended claim 21 and 27, respectively, and, hence, include all the limitations of the respected independent claim. Accordingly, the above arguments with respect to the independent claims 21 and 27 equally apply to the new dependent claims 40 and 41, respectively, and are hereby incorporated by reference.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that Simmons fails to teach or show all the elements of the new claims 40 and 41.

Claim 42 depends on the amended claim 31 and, hence, includes all the limitations of the amended claim 31. Accordingly, the above argument with respect to the independent claim 31 equally applies to the new dependent claim 42 and is hereby incorporated by reference.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that Simmons fails to teach or show all the elements of the new claim 42. In addition, Applicants submit that the combination of Simmons and Yan fails to render the present invention as claimed in the new claim 42 obvious.

Claim 43 depends on the amended claim 34 and, hence, includes all the limitations of the amended claim 34. Accordingly, the above argument with respect to the independent claim 34 equally applies to the new dependent claim 43 and is hereby incorporated by reference.

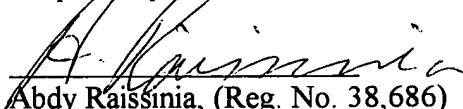
In view of the above, Applicants submit that Simmons fails to teach or show all the elements of the new claim 43. In addition, Applicants submit that the combination of Simmons and Yan fails to render the present invention as claimed in the new claim 43 obvious.

### CONCLUSION

Claims 14-37 and the new claims 38-43 remain pending in this application for reconsideration by the Examiner. In view of the above amendments and remarks, Applicants submit that the pending claims are now in condition for allowance. Accordingly, the speedy allowance of the pending claims is respectfully requested.

If the Examiner believes that a telephone conversation with the undersigned would expedite the prosecution of the present invention in any way, the Examiner is hereby invited to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

Respectfully submitted,



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